

SOMERVILLE COMMISSION for Persons with DISABILITIES (SCD)

MEETING NOTES MAY 3, 2005, 6:30 PM WALNUT ST. HOUSE

PRESENT: JOHN CHIAMPA, President, CRAIG FLETCHER, TOM PETERS, WILLIAM VIENNEAU, AL RUBIO, JOE MADIEROS, EI FELDMAN

Contains:

- Review of past month actions (page 1)
- New business items per member reports (pages 1 - 3)
- GOALS of SDC (pages 3-4)

Review:

1. AJ Wright given plaque for accessibility to disabled workers Ceremony; report of Ceremony will appear in Somerville News Thursday, may 5.
2. Bonnie Carol spoke with Mayor regarding ceremony to honor Joe Keene, former member of SCD. We suggest a plaque ceremony in Davis Square.
3. Craig called TAGS/ Porter Square Shopping Mall to arrange Citation Ceremony for their excellent training program for persons with disabilities. DATE: MAY 21, 2005 2 pm. Members will be present.

NEW BUSINESS in order of discussion:

1. John speaking with **CAAS** - new head start school on Linden? St. in Union Square - to **give them a citation** for their excellent ACCESSIBLE DESIGN- elevator, walkway, etc. perhaps this will happen in June- or September, the beginning of their school year.
2. JOHN CIAMPA NOMINATES **CRAIG FOR VICE PRESIDENT**. Craig accepts. **Will be formalized at Annual Meeting**.
3. ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES: **SOMERVILLE LIBRARY:**
Main Library: doorway is inaccessible due to small foyer and doors opening out instead of in; the Commission suggests 2 automatic handicapped accessible doors- outside door and inner door;

Also: ramp is uneven. AND no elevator to the second floor.

West (Davis Square) library: elevator needed? doors accessible?
unclear info- ***need to investigate accessibility.***

Bruce Neumann will check out both library branches for accessibility.

4. *PRESIDENT CIAMPA WILL BE SPEAKING WITH THE MAYOR* to request and notify the following:

A. Acceptance and Swearing-in of 4 or 5 new board members.
John Long will need to come to meeting and we request the Mayor's audience as well. Our next meeting is the ANNUAL MEETING JUNE 21st [NOTE: Meeting will be June 28th instead] at the Walnut Street Center.

B. At the Annual Meeting we would also like to formally elect Craig Fletcher Vice-President and Eileen Feldman as Secretary.

C. TAGS Positive Accessibility honored at a Ceremony May 21st at 2 pm.

D. We would like a link and page on the City of Somerville website so that Somerville Residents can be aware of the Commission and contact us with any issues regarding disability rights. [NOTE: There is a link, listed under Commissions. No information is posted on that link regarding the Commission business at this time.]

5. *We will invite the Somerville Parking and Traffic Department/ Commissioner to meet/speak with us* regarding several issues about handicapped parking space accessibility as well as other issues identified by the Commission. Some parking issues include:

A. Brooks Pharmacy does not have an accessible parking spot during regular business hours b/c 2 persons with disabilities in the area are using these spots for their work parking needs. Suggestion: 1 or 2 more spaces need to become available- perhaps ensure that at least 1 of the spaces in front of the pharmacy be used only by persons using the pharmacy at that time.

B. Some residential questions regarding : -what can be done to give folks who are driving disabled persons or delivering needed supplies, like groceries or prescriptions, etc.; as well as when picking up such items in an emergency for them- a special parking permit for such times?

4. **ANNUAL MEETING; will be June 28th, 6:30 pm.** The meeting will include:

- A. Election of Officers to begin term in September
- B. Swearing in of New Commission Members by John Long
- C. Meeting Agenda:
 - Create Funding Objectives
 - Continue Discussion/Information/Strategies regarding **SDC**

GOALS

SDC GOALS

Craig brought information regarding the COMMUNITY ACCESS MONITOR PROJECT and also a paragraph from the NE ADA Technical Assistance Center (?), which is printed below:

“Accessibility means more than ramps for wheelchair access. People with all types of physical, sensory, cognitive or other disabilities must be insured equal access to facilities, services and programs. People with disabilities must not be discriminated against through structural barriers, unequal policies or practices, or inaccessible means of communication and dissemination of information. People with disabilities need a fair and adequate system for providing community supports that allow them to live independently.”

Thus, an important discussion was stimulated regarding our GOALS.

-Craig will call MA Council on Disabilities to ensure that Somerville is among the cities listed on their site.

GOALS AGREED UPON:

1. **Some (or all) of us will train to become COMMUNITY ACCESS MONITORS.** Craig will find out date(s) for next training session(s).

2. **We will then scout Somerville section by section to ensure compliance with ADA regulations.** First we will check out new stores and construction sites and other most frequented public areas.
3. **We will do everything possible to ensure that all Somerville residents find us available to answer questions and investigate issues regarding accessibility and disability rights in Somerville, MA.**
4. **At each meeting, we will invite selected City Department officers and other specialists to come meet/speak with us regarding disability issues and other issues appropriate to our work. For example: Architectural Commission, DPW, Housing, Parking & Traffic, MBTA.**
5. **We will write a letter to our Mayor to request his presence at our meetings at least once a year, in order to ensure and facilitate mutual communication as pertains to our ongoing advocacy for disabled citizens.**
6. **An Educational Committee will be formed. One goal of that committee will be to educate persons studying in the health professions regarding disability issues; also to give our work visibility... this could be a Funding Objective...**
(Somerville AARP used to offer a scholarship to a student specializing in Elder Affairs, perhaps we could think about this concept for another Funding Opp...)